

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Examiner is thanked for his review of the application and for the telephone interview of February 2, 2006 in which he indicated that he would reconsider his rejections of the pending Claims over Koyama in view of Abraham.

Claims 1-17 remain in this application. Claim 1 has been amended to better clarify the invention. Dependent Claims 12-17 have been amended for clarity. New Claims 18-22 have been added. No new matter has been added.

In the Final Office Action dated November 29, 2005, the Examiner objected to Claims 9-10 stating that 'the external telephone system' lacks antecedent basis. Applicant wishes to point out that the "external telephone system" recited in dependent Claims 9-10 is also recited in base Claim 1 "a telephony interface for coupling the at least one netphone to an external telephone system" (emphasis added).

In the same Office Action the Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koyama (US 2003/0227910) in view of Abraham et al. (US 5,978,568).

Regarding Claim 1, the Examiner has stated that "Koyama discloses a digital attendant (fig. 1, item 12) useful in association with a netphone (item 18), a voicemail device (item 11; para 6, lines 1-2) and a local area network (item 101). The attendant comprises a LAN interface (connection to LAN 102, a telephony interface (connection to line 102), wherein the **netphone includes an inherent netphone directory to store addresses for the digital attendant and the voicemail device** (para. 32, lines 7-15 and 19-27; para. 6), wherein the voicemail device includes a directory to store a network address for the netphone (para. 6), and an attendant directory to store a network address for the netphone (para. 32, lines 7-15 and 19-27; note: IP addresses are used for communication over the LAN – para. 32, lines 13-15). However, Koyama does not specifically disclose that the voicemail device and the attendant store the addresses of each other. Although, Koyama discloses communication between outside telephone users through the

attendant (para. 7) and Koyama discloses storing voice mail messages for the users of the network. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to for the voicemail device to store the address of the attendant and the attendant to store the address of the voicemail device in the invention of Koyama in order to provide communications between the voicemail device and the attendant so that voice mail messages may be left for the netphones from outside users (para. 6).” (Emphasis added).

To the extent that Applicant understands the English translation of Koyama, which states “the identifier used for specifying the unit transmitting the signal is the telephone number or the network address is decided on the basis of the rule for designating the identifier of the unit to which the signal is transmitted” (paragraph 32, lines 14-19). Koyama appears to teach the ability to **identify the incoming call type** by differentiating between either the telephone number or the network address provided by the caller.

Koyama does not appear to teach nor suggest the present invention in which a distributed directory system advantageously operates without the need for a centralized PBX or equivalent central node, thereby avoiding a single point of failure. Such a **distributed directory system** also allows netphone(s) to be added or removed during operation without the need for intervention by the central node because “each of the at least one netphone includes a netphone directory configured to store and to update network addresses for the digital attendant and the voicemail device” as recited by Claim 1 (emphasis added).

Hence Claim 1 is distinguishable over Koyoma and should be allowable. Claims 2-17 which depend on Claim 1 should also be allowable for at least the same reasons.

In the Office Action, the Examiner also acknowledges that “**Koyama does not disclose updating the addresses of devices of the network**” (emphasis added). The Examiner adds “Abraham discloses updating network addresses (col. 18, lines 38-47). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to update the addresses of the devices in the invention of Koyama in order to use the current address of a device (Abraham, col. 18, lines 43-45).”

Again, to the extent that Applicant understands the English translation of Abraham, Abraham appears to teach away from the present invention by disclosing a centralized master directory system in which the “**network server 30** also includes ... mass memory 42 [which]

stores the naming service manager 46 which collects, **maintains and serves mapping information for all of the computers** connected to the LAN 24 and their users ...and correlates the mapping information ... for each user of the LAN 24. The naming service manager 46 then provides or serves the correlated mapping information to naming service applications 48 which require such information.” (Col. 5, lines 26-47) (Emphasis added).

In contrast, Applicant’s Claim 1 recites “a netphone directory configured to store and to update network addresses for the digital attendant and the voicemail device, and wherein the voicemail device includes a voicemail directory configured to store and to update network addresses for the digital attendant and the at least one netphone; and an attendant directory configured to store and to update network addresses for the netphone and the voicemail device.” (Emphasis added).

Hence Claim 1 is clearly distinguishable over both cited references Koyama and Abraham, alone or in combination, and should be allowable. Claims 2-17 which depend on Claim 1 should also be allowable for at least the same reasons.

New Claims 18-22 have been added and they all depend on base Claim 1, and also should be allowable for at least the same reasons discussed above for Claim 1. Support for Claim 18 can be found in Applicant’s specification on page 84, paragraphs 420, 421 and Figures 55 and 56. Support for Claims 19-22 can be found on page 79-80, paragraphs 413-415 and also Figures 50A and 50B.

In sum, base Claim 1 is believed to be allowable. Dependent Claims 2-22 which depend therefrom are also believed to be allowable as being dependent from the patentable parent Claim 1 for at least the same reasons. Hence, Examiner’s rejection of dependent Claims 2-17 is rendered moot in view of allowable independent Claim 1. New Claims 18-22 which also depend on base Claim 1 have been added and are also believed to be allowable. No new matter has been added.

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Applicants believe that all pending Claims 1-22 are now allowable over the cited art and are also in allowable form and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. The commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees that may be due or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 50-2766 (Order No. SW-0301). Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at telephone number 925-570-8198.

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Respectfully submitted,



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